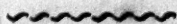


EDMOND; K

ORPHAN OF THE CASTLE,

A TRAGEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS,



FOUNDED ON THE "OLD ENGLISH BARON," A
GOTHIC STORY.



London:

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PROLOGUE.

By *. *****



THE Author's, first attempt, appears to view,
Whose fears are *many*, and whose hopes, but *few* !
With doubtful mind, submits to your remarks,
And on this awful ocean thus embarks——
Dreads the keen chill of critic's cutting gales,
Whilst Agitation hoists his vent'rous sails !
Each rise or fall of scenes, like swelling waves,
Alternate hopes and fears his bosom heaves——
But ere he sails, thus far for him I plead ;——
“ No high born villain, nor, imprudent maid,
“ By scenes afflicting, can your pity claim,
“ Errors to countenance, you'd blush to name !
“ No scope t' indulgence in rank vice's course,
“ Render'd retrievable by forc'd remorse ;
“ No scenes disgusting to the moral eye,
“ Nor imprecations drawn down from on high ;
“ The hero virtuous, and the heroine pure,
“ Good are their hearts, altho' expressions poor.”

Further I dare not plead the Author's case,
Candour, in gen'rous hearts, e'er keeps her place ;
To that fair maid, I trust his future plea,

(goes to the side scene.)

The Author call'd, and bid me thus to say——

“ Conscious of his presumption in this task,
“ Your PATIENCE is the only boon he'll ask.”

PROLOGUE

Dramatis Personae:

EDMOND, *Orphan of the Castle.*
LORD FITZOWEN,
SIR ROBERT, } *his Sons.*
ARNOLD, }
OCTAVIAN, } *his Kinsmen.*
MALCOLM, }
OSWALD, *friar of the Castle,* } *to the late Lord Lovel.*
JOSEPH, *a domestic,* }
LORD CLIFFORD,
SIR PHILLIP HARCLAY,
LORD WALTER LOVEL,
HERALDS, *Servants, Ruffians, &c.*

EMMA, *daughter of Lord Fitzowen,*
CICELY, *a peasant's wife.*

EDMOND;

ORPHAN

OF THE

CASTLE.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

*A spacious old hall in Lovel Castle, hung round with
armorial bearings.*

OSWALD met by EDMOND.

EDMOND.

HAIL pious Father, whose benignant smile,
Welcomes the Orphan to the gen'rous dome,
Which long hath cherish'd him within its walls:
An Orphan's fate in charity is centr'd,
Poor the return, for Gratitude's his all!
How much I owe thee for thy unfeign'd friendship,
Much more I owe thee for thy christian precepts;
Which in the midst of gay licentious camps,

B

Excited actions brave—humanely temper'd—
 Checking the wanderings of illicit youth.

OSWALD.

My high-born boy! for so I'd fain thee call,
 'Twas honest seed sown in a gen'rous soil,
 And who could doubt a rich abundant produce:
 Welcome, thrice welcome, to these ancient walls,
[embraces him]
 Whose oaken sides, have witness'd deeds of old,
 Which could they speak——

EDMOND, (*interrupting.*)

Acts might disclose which known,
 Would mark th' escutcheons of those fires deceas'd,
 Whose specious deeds, free from their untold crimes,
 May still call forth our virtuous emulation.

OSWALD.

True, true, good Son—but when designing knaves,
 Merit traduce, their minds of envy cover;
 E'en like the wretch who from the kingly brow,
 The sacred diadem purloineth — gains but the
 bauble,
 Void of the honour, which its value stamps!
 E'en so would men in ev'ry virtue wanting,
 Deprive my Edmond of his goodly fame!

The blood now boils within the veins of age,
And youthful anger agitates my frame!

EDMOND.

Suppress, my pious Sire, your friendly wrath,
'Tis meet—'tis common in this track of life,
For men t'exalt themselves on other's shoulders;
And for the pain endur'd, by those thus traml'd
on,

(pointing upwards)

There is a recompence surpassing all!

OSWALD.

Thy goodness overwhelms me!—fie! fie! old man,
Whose midnight oil has seventy winters blaz'd,
T'enlighten thee with that, which beardless youth,
Of better nature form'd can thus inculcate;
But I submit—and 'stead of Oswald teaching—

EDMOND—*(interrupting)*

—Desist, and pardon me for my presumption,
If you approve, say rather 'twas those maxims,
Which Oswald's pious care to Edmond gave—
Occurrences domestic I would hear,
How fares my faithful friend the gen'rous Arnold?

OSWALD.

In health he's well—would I could say of all,

His mind e'er soars above the bonds of Prejudice,
The wise man's error and the fool's prerogative !

EDMOND.

I know 'gainst whom thou dart'st thy angry hints ;
But let Sir Robert, born to vast possessions,
Enjoy the sense of gifts great Heav'n has boon'd ;
Let fierce Octavian and his fawning cox,
By various arts attempt the Tree to fall,
Which stands erect amidst their angry blasts ;——
Whilst my protector deigns on me to smile,
And Father Oswald will his counsels give,
My trunk, in bark so strong their efforts scorns,
Its branches cherish'd by the Sun of Virtue,
Shall dart their shoots propitious 'gainst the blasts
Of ruthless rancour—and if occasion,
'Neath those very boughs my angry foes shall find
A shelter from adversity !

OSWALD.

'Tis nobly said !
Their machinations must be thwarted, Son,
We'll pray to Heav'n t' avert intended mischief:
My lord awaits now in the painted chamber,
Marv'ling I doubt not at thy tardy progress,
Which may, for ought we know, be term'd neglect.

Exeunt.

EDMOND.

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SCENE II.

Discovers Lord Fitzowen seated, with his Sons Sir Robert and Arnold, also Octavian, Malcolm, and attendants.

FITZOWEN.

Fatigues and labours of a long campaign,
Are lessons for nobility—who else,
Lost in the labyrinth of luxury,
By palsied ease and headstrong passions rul'd,
No gen'rous pity would their bosoms know,
Nor thought conceive of restless endless toil;
Deeming the race of man for them created,
And they born tyrants o'er the vast majority.
In each degree let pride her portion take,
But when she tends to rob the gen'rous breast,
Destroy compassion and its kindred virtues,
Pride is a vice contemptible I ween!
For man was born for man, links of one chain,
Some act for us—why we not act for them?——
——Whence is it, kinsmen, that I see not Edmond?
He e'er was wont to greet his patron first.

SIR ROBERT.

'Tis true, my lord, 'twas then more humble days,
The pride of conquest may its influence bear,

Or high promotion from a Sov'reign's hand,
Might banish gratitude from low-born minds!

FITZOWEN.

Robert forbear! your enmity displeases;
All vulgar passions are beneath your birth;
Though others harbour thoughts injurious,
(looking at Octavian and Malcolm)
Ne'er let my first-born son from me dissent;
Experience gives discernment—these whitening
locks,
Are now too proud for beardless boys' dictating!
His gen'rous soul I know—still will I foster it.

Enter EDMOND and FRIAR OSWALD.

EDMOND *kneels.*

EDMOND.

Parental greeting o'er, I now presume,
To offer thus a grateful joyous heart;
Grateful for kindness when incapable,
Of lisping forth my thanks—and fraught with joy,
To see my patron blest'd with vig'rous health.

FITZOWEN.

Rise, Edmond rise, where Prudence takes her seat,
The mind possessing shall not lack Fitzowen:
I wish to hear th' events of battles fought,

EDMOND.

To hear thee tell how thy young mind, amidst
The din of arms and well contested broils,
Did act.

OCTAVIAN—(*aside*)

Prepare to hear a grave and dull detail,
Of valorous Saracens in combat slain!
Together with the Prince's public thanks,
Which he before the camp in person gave;
Curses light on his fluency of speech,
Which loudly echoeth to our confusion.

EDMOND.

Youth in experienc'd in the ways of war,
Cannot oft boast, my lord, of warlike feats;
Suffice to note, they of your lordship's blood,
Were steady, brave and valiant in the field:
All flattery as insult gross I hold,
Truth would I deem my leading star and guide,
Fitzowen's sanction gain'd me that reward,
To which my merits had but trivial claim.

ARNOLD—(*aside*)

Praise from a braggart's tongue the action cancels,
Whilst modesty exalts the deed still higher!

FITZOWEN.

'Tis well, my friends, the glory of the war
 To me is heighten'd by your safe return.
 Sir Robert, to our closet we'll repair;
 Octavian and Malcolm, to country sports
 This interval of peace ye will devote.

ARNOLD—(*aside*)

According full as well as nobler games!

FITZOWEN.

Edmond farewell—Friar Oswald, call e'er noon:

Exeunt.

SCENE III.

EDMOND, ARNOLD, and OSWALD.

ARNOLD.

Friendship, like love, protracts the course of time,
 Each passion absence rend'ring still more firm:
 Edmond, my friend, thy fame and fortune heard,
 My opening manhood lost its hardy nature,
 And few could note amidst the signs of joy,
 Who bore the strongest symptoms I, or Emma.
 But soft, permit me now in Oswald's presence—

(calls at the door)

Dear Emma! Emma! come 'tis Arnold calls.

EDMOND.

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Enter EMMA,

EMMA.

When Arnold calls, sure Emma will obey,
To Arnold, Emma owes her ev'ry joy:——
And Edmond here—(*aside*)

Whence tend these strange emotions,
I e'er was wont to meet him as my brother?

EDMOND—(*aside.*)

Embarrassments o'erwhelm her — presumptuous
thoughts!

EMMA.

Edmond's return gives joy to all his friends—
Blest Peace recalls th' inmates of this castle;
Whose days of youth, and gladsome days they were,
Past unperceiv'd beneath the shade of pleasure.

EDMOND.

Pleasure now past, and yet still pleasures give,
By bright'ning Memory on happier times,—
E'en in the midst of Misery's irksome path,
A transient gleam plays o'er the lank pale visage,
When youthful deeds occur—and all lament
That times so sweet should be so very short!

C

Oh! Lady fair! e'en in the battle's height,
My friends e'er occupied my ardent mind.

ARNOLD.

And 'midst the stillness of these awful ranges,
Melodious echo oft thy name hath sung.

EDMOND.

That thought conceiv'd had made mine arm do
wonders!

EMMA leans on ARNOLD's arm, OSWALD frowns.

EMMA.

Oswald, nay frown not thus—I know thy fears,
But Arnold's soul's too great to be contaminated
By intercourse effeminate—a lonely Sister
Looks for a mind congenial with her own,
Companion or Protector, who more proper
Than him she loves and calls withall her brother?

OSWALD,

Pardon my caution, but where friendship lives
A jealousy of error should preside!

Exeunt severally.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A wood near the castle, men pass the stage with timber.

Enter EDMOND and OSWALD.

EDMOND.

THE Peasants seem alert, more num'rous too,
Than when from Lovel Castle I departed—
It cheers my heart when men exalted high,
To industry their powerful aid extend,
Banishing Poverty from cottage doors!

OSWALD.

His God he loves, his Country's welfare seeks,
Who shares those gifts which Providence has
boon'd!

EDMOND.

Whence tend these bustling preparations, Father?

OSWALD.

My Lord Fitzowen means t'erect a suit

Of grand apartments, on the western side,
Similar to those long founded on the east.

OCTAVIAN *and* MALCOLM *appear amidst the trees.*

EDMOND.

I marvel much at that—since here I've been,
I ne'er beheld the eastern turret open!

OSWALD.

The cause thou never heard'st, then, of its closure?

EDMOND.

Inquisitive impertinence might seek it!

OSWALD.

Thou hast discretion, sure, above thine years;
The tattling world tells tales of marv'lous import!

EDMOND.

Pardon me, Friar, within me thou hast rais'd
A lack of information which affects me;
If no injunction interdicts thy speech,
My craving curiosity allay,
Reveal this secret tale, I do entreat thee?

OSWALD.

Alone, and of your prudence well convinc'd,

I will, in part, detail this mystery :——
The late Lord Lovel, our regretted Lord,
Slept in yon tower, untill his Sov'reign call'd
His services to quell a civil broil;
He, Lady Lovel left, then full of grief,
Likely, ere long, to make her Lord a Father.

EDMOND.

My heart's oppress'd—sensations new arise——
Haste thee, good Father, with thy sad narration.

OSWALD.

Rebellion bent beneath the royal arms,
And all the inmates of this ancient castle
Look'd, with their Lady, for their Lord's return—
But ah! uncertain are the ways of fate!
Now of his health inform'd—now of his death,
His kinsman, Walter, brought the deadly news!

EDMOND.

Walter! what he who now the title bears?

OSWALD.

The same, alas! in calling, but in deeds
No contradiction in the world exists,
Emphatically strong the difference to show!

EDMOND.

EDMOND.

His relict! Father Oswald, how far'd she?

OSWALD.

Her piety and perseverance, Son,
 Caus'd Walter's wonder at her fortitude!—
 Horror now shakes my frame when I recall
 One fatal night! I well remember, Son,
 The elements themselves e'en war'd with Nature!
 Lightning illum'd, and Thunder shook the earth!
 Our Lady fled! and, from that awful night
 No tidings of her fate hath reach'd our ears!

EDMOND.

My list'ning faculties absorb thy words
 Quicker, good Oswald, than expressions flow!

OSWALD.

Walter, now Lovel's Lord, possession took,
 Whose wise precaution these apartments clos'd,
 For rumour had reported they were haunted,
 And Walter shudder'd at unseemly tales!

[*Octavian and Malcolm retire.*]

EDMOND.

His residence so short! it seems as if
 The whole of Lovel Castle was disturb'd.

OSWALD.

To Lord Fitzowen, who espous'd his sister,
 A deed of gift of this demesne he gave;
 Nor hath his person 'neath this roof been seen,
 Since thy kind patron's residence was here.—
 Nought but surmise now 'scapes the lips of men:
 My lord doth much dislike the subject nam'd!

EDMOND.

His soul so pure I know laments the cause!
 The deed is foul when Heav'n withdraws the mask!

OSWALD.

I fear this is—yet dread to have that fear,
 Deeds past and past recalling, our complaints
 May bring a needless trouble with them:—
 Ah! Octavian here! zeal has outstrip'd my caution!

Enter OCTAVIAN.

OCTAVIAN.

Meeting my Lord Fitzowen in the wood,
 With angry frown, he order'd me to summons
 Grave Father Oswald and his pious pupil,
 To attend to answer charges of that nature,
 Which tend to hurt the fame of Lovel House!

EDMOND.

Proceed, Octavian; your malice is impotent!
 Justice presides within Fitzowen's breast
 So truly chaste, that Innocence, when spurn'd,
 Must glory in the trial 'fore such a Judge!

[*Exeunt Edmond and Oswald.*]

OCTAVIAN.

Ar't caught, proud Edmond! and old Prelate too!
 Happy the hour that led me to your council,
 Apt, too, the cause which brought Fitzowen near;
 Vengeance is quick, no time e'er lost by hatred;
 Give me his fame within my grasp, I'll keep my
 hold,

Virtue's supreme! 'till blossom Fame is blighted!

[*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

Discovers Fitzowen seated, Sir Robert, Arnold, Octavian, Malcolm, Edmond and Oswald.

FITZOWEN.

I'll hear no more, Octavian, 'tis enough—
 Oswald, discretion you have lack'd, I ween,
 Which age and wisdom, Father, should command!
 As for this youth, to prove this tale is false,

(*to Edmond*)

EDMOND.

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He shall himself this night the turret occupy,
Blame him I must, and punishment should follow!

EDMOND.

Blame me alone, my Lord, t'was boyish prying
Which led good Oswald to this fancied tale;
To your decree, I, penitent, submit.

[*Exit with Oswald.*]

FITZOWEN, (*to Malcolm and Octavian.*)

Hatred e'er blinds the mind of him possessing,
Blackens the heart, rendering it even prone
To acts of baseness, which else, we wish to think,
A better judgment would indignant scorn!
Your conduct tarnishes Fitzowen's name,
The kindred I disown, my presence leave;
Guilt shan't escape, when virtue must be punish'd;
Th' ensuing night, Octavian and Malcolm,
Sleep on that couch which Edmond this night
takes!

SIR ROBERT.

My Lord!

LORD FITZOWEN, (*with disdain.*)

Justice be bias'd! no! thy Father, hath decreed!

[*Exeunt.*]

D

SCENE IV.

OSWALD and JOSEPH (*with a lamp.*)

OSWALD.

Hast thou, good Joseph, been within these rooms,
Which are, anon, our youthful friend to lodge?

JOSEPH.

No, Oswald, no! my heart is almost broke,
The world I loath the more of men I know;
These are the bitters Providence design'd,
To wean the aged from this thorny path,
To seek a refuge in a world to come!

OSWALD.

Ar't not impress'd,—that from this strange decree,
New lights on our suggestions dark, may rise,
And prove our Edmond is——

JOSEPH—(*interrupting*)

Ah! the thought's too much!

OSWALD.

Behold the youth advance with look depress'd!

EDMOND.

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Enter EDMOND.

EDMOND.

The injur'd man by calumny traduc'd,
Flees to his friends as sanctuary divine!
Teems forth his current of complaint, to them,
Who hear his tale and feel his sorrow too!

OSWALD.

But when the beast of prey the forest prowls
'Tis meet the gentle lamb should cease his bleating :
The hour of midnight, youth, approacheth fast!

EDMOND.

Methinks I'm tardy in this avocation;
Is this the entrance to my dread abode?—

(pointing to the folding doors.)

A mind, en-armour'd by the christian faith,
Feels heav'nly awe, void of all earthly terror,
At super-natural events!—they serve but as
Weapons 'gainst Infidelity!—My friends, proceed--

(Oswald and Joseph are endeavouring to open the doors)

OSWALD.

Joseph, desist! the wards of the rusty lock,
From want of use are now become impassable:

EDMOND.

JOSEPH.

Edmond's strong efforts might perhaps succeed.

(Edmond takes the key and the doors fly open—they start.)

EDMOND.

Tis strange!—

JOSEPH.

Tis true!—

OSWALD.

But marv'lous, good Joseph!—

EDMOND.

Sensations of peculiar nature rise!
As if my throbbing breast would burst in twain,
To enter that, which bears such dismal aspect;
And whence the innate cause I cannot trace!
Why stand my friends in sullen stupor lost?
Father, the call's within; doth dastard fear
Oppose the passage then?

OSWALD.

We know no mortal fear,
Implicitly we'll follow Edmond's steps!

(they enter.)

SCENE—V.

Scene rises and discovers a large chamber, with folding doors on each side; a state bed in the centre, much injured by time.

Enter EDMOND, OSWALD, and JOSEPH.

JOSEPH.

Though time's destroy'd the splendor of this room,
With me, it still retains its ancient grandeur;
And recollection of those halcyon days,
When my lost Lord and Lady here repos'd,
Draws tears of sorrow from my aged eyes:
Ill fated pair! so premature to find
The mould'ring grave! -

OSWALD.

Joseph, tis so! lay down the lamp--
Accommodations here are coarse, my Son,
All doth conspire to render this abode
Awfully solemn, and but ill befitting:
Would we could share with thee its gloom,
But 'tis forbid we find—and feelingly accede!
May Heav'n support thee in this awful trial,
And whatsoe'er thou either see'st or hear'st,
Cautiously keep within thy bosom secret;
Nor let eke sudden fear or sudden sounds,
Fright thee to alarm the Castle's quiet.—

JOSEPH.

Good night, good night, we wish thee rest and
peace!

EDMOND.

Farewell, good Friar; farewell, my oldest friend.

[*Exit Oswald and Joseph.*]

EDMOND.

The screech owl's note, the noisy bird of night,
Reverb'rates midst the ivy mantl'd towers:—
Fit place for meditation this dread gloom,
Where human footsteps hath not trod for years,
Darkness alone, the mansion's silent lord:—
An Orphan thus, may fickle fortune frame,
A Bark! launch'd on the Ocean's wide expanse,
On rude rocks dash'd—from shore to shore borne—
No port his haven—no pilot can he boast
But veering winds and restless flowing tides!—
The Parody runs thus:—The World; his ocean
wide—
The rocks; its follies, vices, errors dire—
No guide from Pleasure's smooth but unsafe shore,
No hospitable roof his Port long proves,
No feeling Parent can his Pilot be,
To guard his fame from malice!—But mere chance

Secures his ebbs or flowings in the tide
Of fordid life!—(*He pauses.*)

Ungrateful Edmond! why
Doth thou repine? who from the early dawn
Of Infancy 'till now, hath found a port
Humane and hospitable!—down, proud spirit,
down!

Who thus, without the mental will, runs restive,
Spurning Dependence, losing which thou starv'st,
Or seeks by beggary a vague asylum!—
Pour in my soul Religion's mild content,
No murmur 'scape my rash upbraiding lips,
In silent prayer I'll seek that bless'd repose,
Which e'er attends a heart at ease with Heaven!

[Reclines on the bed, and the curtain falls.]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

The same scene, Edmond on the bed asleep; on one side the ghost of Lord Lovel in armour, with the beaver down: on the other Lady Lovel; soft musick is heard and they retire through the folding doors.

EDMOND (*awakes much disturbed.*)

EDMOND.

AH! is it so? or do ideal flights oppress my brain?

Methought, they said "HAIL EDMOND LORD OF LOVEL!"

And then! Oh God! with solemn groans cried
"MURDER" thrice!—

With hands uplifted blest'd me as their Son,
When heav'nly sounds possess'd my wond'ring
soul!—

My stricken heart of superstition void,
Beats with emotion at my marv'lous dreams:—

(A wind proceeds through the apartments and the folding doors close.)

Behold! the doors now close through which they
pass'd!

Great Heav'n! are these thy messengers of fate;
Are they decreed t'unfold each darken'd deed,
Which sapient villainy hath still secreted?—
Yet stop, and ponder well, vain Edmond!
E'er thou'rt convinc'd, to thee the augur tends;
Edmonds, there are, besides the orphan Edmond!—
My mind's a labyrinth without a clue,
Oft have I dream'd, and like a vision 'twas
Playing o'er my fancy of reflection void,—
My new 'woke eyes by real objects struck
The fleeting forms lost ev'ry faint impression—
—Here! dread solemnity my senses power'd,
And though I slept, yet still I seem'd awake!—

(turning towards the doors.)

Through yonder doors they made their awful exit!
My enquiring mind would fain seek further proof—
Guilt may have fears—but Innocence hath none!
I'll follow!—*(goes through the door.)*

SCENE II.

*Discovers an apartment hung round with Family
Pictures, the Ghost of Lord Lovel leaning on a pe-
destal, on which burns a lamp—Edmond enters with
great emotion, approaches slowly towards the figure,
kneels, attempts to clasp the hand, when the Armour
falls with a loud noise, without the figure.—*

E

EDMOND,—(*after a considerable pause.*)

My visual faculties are worn to darkness,
Stupendous weights weigh down my recollection,
Oh! Heav'n preserve my intellectual powers!

(*Examines the armour and discovers blood on the breast plate.*)

Ah! gor'd with blood, perhaps a Father's blood!
(*weeps.*)

Thanks pearly drops which as they gently fall
Cheer the oppression of my breaking heart!
Oh! cruel fate! where will my trials end?
I'll seek the murderer!—in this coat of mail
Fly on the world in desperate pursuit,
Revenge the body which it last encompass'd!

[*Exit, with armour.*]

SCENE—III.

The state bed-chamber.

Enter EDMOND, with the armour.

EDMOND.

The pale eye'd morn now creeps through the
embrasure,
And birds of day, with sweet melodious songs,
Cause nightly wings to seek their darksome haunts.

(Knocking at the door—Edmond starts.)

Hark!—how must a noise appal the guilty
wretch

When I thus start unconscious of foul crimes?
Tis Oswald,—he shall this visitation search,
Whose conduct bore a myst'ry e'er he left me.

Enter OSWALD, and JOSEPH.

BOTH.

Thank Heav'n he's well!

EDMOND—*(affecting indifference.)*

And wherefore not my friends?
The damp of this cold room, could not effect
Disease so sudden!

OSWALD.

His agitated frame in vain dissembles—*(apart)*
The light'ning's tardy when compar'd to thought,
Ideas flow most rapid on the mind
Susceptible of feeling and compassion!
My son!

EDMOND.

Father!

OSWALD.

Whence so thoughtful, Edmond,
Thy fears hath sure thy night's repose disturb'd?

EDMOND.

My mind's so full my words can't give thoughts vent,
 And all attempts the occurrences to trace
 Of this dark night, are vain and ineffectual;
 Thy caution, learned Father, was not needless!
 Let that suffice—and in an hour hence
 Beneath the chappel's dome my friends I'll meet,
 There to relate what I this night experienc'd;
 Oswald! they flatter'd me beyond my peers!

OSWALD.

My aged heart in palpitations vie
 E'en with the palsied weakness of my frame;
 The power of Heav'n support me in this trial,
 Direct our course! without thy aid, Oh! Providence,
 All worldly wisdom wields the shadow's lance!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Enter Sir Robert, Octavian, Malcolm, and Arnold.

SIR ROBERT.

The night was rough—did Edmond take his rest,
 My brother Arnold, in the tower of sprites?

ARNOLD.

I fear not, Sir Robert: a couch so rough

To answer to your taunts—was not design'd
T' afford repose——

OCTAVIAN—(*interrupting.*)

——To bolder men than Edmond,
Is that, good Sir, the purport of your speech?

ARNOLD.

Mark, Octavian! his great mind I know
Harbours no thoughts which cowardice hath tainted;
From you, and Malcolm, we expect to gain,
Some ghostly information, form'd in Fear!

MALCOLM.

The place is far too dull for my desires.

OCTAVIAN.

And for mine—a mind of meditation
May enjoy the luxury of horrors,
And contemplate the frailties of man,
(Apart to Arnold)
Or through your int'rest th' excellencies of woman!

ARNOLD.

A precious gem in view, wise Sir, I think,
The maid who took a rude unshapen stone,
Could not much boast, at least, of her discernment!

OCTAVIAN—(*aloud*)

Arnold you're insolent!

ARNOLD.

E'en so, Octavian!

If insult, draws down insult, blame the seeker.

SIR ROBERT—(*interfering.*)

My Brother's mind is candid void of insult,
As to its giving—and for the taking, Sir,
A brother's care shall e'er preserve him free;
For though 'gainst Edmond thou and I unite,
Deeming presumption wrong in low born men;
Still know, Octavian, Arnold's pious calling,
As for the Holy Church he is design'd,
Shall ne'er expose him, in so good a cause,
To ev'ry taunt of fancied strength in that,
Which God proscribes, and good men disapprove!

Enter LORD FITZOWEN, *followed by* MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

Sir Phillip Harclay, knight, is just arrived,
And seeks an audience with your Lordship.

FITZOWEN.

Sir Phillip Harclay has th' advantage of me—
Enough! the Laws of Hospitality admission give,

Fam'd Albion's boast—and nought can it forego,
But baneful luxury and excess of vice;
The gen'rous chief on this productive soil,
Extends its produce to the stranger's comfort,
And whilst the exalted doom a shelter gives,
Its sounds re-echo to the donor's honour!

Enter SIR PHILLIP.

Welcome, Sir Phillip, to this ancient seat,
Be what your errand may, you here shall find,
A knightly welcome from the Lord Fitzowen!

SIR PHILLIP.

Pardon, I crave, my Lord, for this intrusion,
Take thus, kind Peer, a vet'ran's introduction;—
—In England's wars a soldier forty years,
Have I my Sov'reign served, in foreign climes,
To some effect—at length, by riches press'd
Void of enjoyment—old age approaching fast,
I thus return unto my native land;—
My rapturous eyes beheld its whiten'd cliffs,
And treacherous fancy to my mind pourtray'd,
The happy meeting of my num'rous friends!
The pleasing search commenc'd brought sorrow
with it!
One after one, friends of my youth I seek,
Who as progressively I learn are gone,
And I alone remain to weep their loss!

OCTAVIAN—(*aloud*)

Arnold you're insolent!

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My rapturous eyes beheld its whiten'd cliffs,
And treacherous fancy to my mind pourtray'd,
The happy meeting of my num'rous friends!
The pleasing search commenc'd brought sorrow
with it!

One after one, friends of my youth I seek,
Who as progressively I learn are gone,
And I alone remain to weep their loss!

But now, Lord Lovel fought I—poor Lovel's dead
And so the next may prove e'en as the last!

FITZOWEN.

Though not so many moons have pass'd by me,
A sympathetic feeling now pervades.

SIR PHILLIP.

Thy fame, Fitzowen, induc'd old Harclay thus,
To intrude, admire and prove report was true!

FITZOWEN.

Remove your grievances, no more repine,
In me imagine Lovel still exists.

*Enter EDMOND, on seeing whom, SIR PHILLIP starts,
repeating FITZOWEN's words unnoticed.*

SIR PHILLIP.

Lovel still exists!—(to Edmond) Ah! youth,
whose Son art thou?

EDMOND, *looking earnestly at* SIR PHILLIP.

No fire have I to grace my path of life,
Nor name of fire, nor mother on my list;
The gen'rous bounty of this castle's chieftain,

Took and cherish'd me from 'midst, the flock,
Of watchful shepherds and their humble mates!

SIR PHILLIP—(*aside.*)

A Mystery!—Walter, the Lord of Lovel!—
Semblance as strong, as fire and son can bear!—
A secret caution creeps within my breast.—

FITZOWEN.

To the festive board, Sir Knight, the noon day
calls,
If peace and plenty can your stay ensure,
With pleasure I'll repay you with that fare.

SIR PHILLIP, *looking at* EDMOND.

My Lord, I follow.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

The wood, Octavian and two Ruffians.

OCTAVIAN.

From yonder shade, I trac'd her to the grove
Of melancholly willows—place of appointment
With the bastard Edmond—ye pretty doves;
Octavian's cunning shall your cooing close:—

F

Be vigilant, my faithful friends, but gentle,
 Convey her to my uncle Walter's castle,
 There you will find a faithful friend of mine,—
 Ah! she comes—— *(they retire)*

Enter EMMA.

The night approacheth fast, the evening's calmness
 And habitual contemplation, have led my steps
 Beyond their usual walk; and still the beauty
 Of this solemn gloom affords me pleasure;—
 My heart yet beats with an unusual fulness,
 Edmond I met, sullen, lost deep in thought,
 And as he pass'd ne'er notic'd I was near!

OCTAVIAN—*(comes forward)*

That charge shall not hold good against Octavian!
 Long hath his notice call'd your scorn, contumely,
 Each act of courtesy, mark'd by invet'rate hate,
 And those fond efforts destin'd for to please,
 Have ever had a different effect!

EMMA.

The prepossessions of the female mind,
 Are strange and often prove erroneous too;—
 More worthy objects seek I do entreat you,
 Indeed I cannot tell you that I love!

OCTAVIAN.—(*the men come forward*)

Then force shall force affection—do your duty!
Resistance, like my love, will now be vain,
Solitude may stubborn tempers soften, Emma!

EMMA—(*kneeling*)

My trembling limbs refuse their wonted office,
And thus I shrink with terror at thy feet!

(*looking at the men.*)

Are those the hands, Octavian would intrust,
With that same fair who once call'd forth his love?
Are they fit keepers of a virgin's fame?
A gem so bright—a mirror of that cast,
That e'en suspicion's breath its surface sullies!—
Oh! rob me not of that esteem'd 'bove worlds!
Take thou my life, a bauble to my fame!

OCTAVIAN.

I'd loath thee dead, whom living I could worship!

EMMA.

Oh! call to view the suff'rings of my fire!
Thy kinsman, friend and patron!—my brother's
rage!
The just contempt of men, deter thy purpose!

EDMOND.

OCTAVIAN.

All, all, I scorn—My love now darts revenge,
And has a comfort to thy love-sick heart,
The deed shall rest on Edmond's specious soul!

EMMA.

Oh! horror—Edmond! Father!

(She is carried off)

OCTAVIAN.

My resolution fails—my mind convuls'd
'Tween womanish compassion and my fears,
Becomes irresolute *(faintly calling)* villains, return!
(listens.)

—Apt savages, in brutal mischief bred,
Deeds that appal a heart unus'd to force,
Ye undertake as ye would say your mattins—
—Tis well! the blow is struck, Emma's the prize,
Resolves courageous, steel my wav'ring soul!
(Exit.)

SCENE VI.

The cell of the Chapel, Enter SIR PHILLIP:

SIR PHILLIP.

Similitude so strong could ne'er exist,
But in the person of Lord Lovel's son—
His death uncertain—at his Lady's fate

The haggard housewife shook her dubious head,
And said 'tis true, she's gone!—Ah! behold the
youth,

In conversation deep and thought profound,
With that sage Friar, who to my questions gave
An incoherent kind of mystic answers,
At which, I marvell'd, even then—they come!
This banner of the Holy Cross may serve,
To screen my person from their observation.

(Retires behind a large banner.)

Enter EDMOND and OSWALD.

EDMOND.

Within these venerable walls 'tis said,
The Lovels are entomb'd, most awful hour!

OSWALD.

Bless'd shades! if ye o'er earthly deeds preside,
And eke can draw to light deep hidden murder,
Send us some aid t' avenge this bloody deed—
Eternal justice issue forth thy power!

(The banner of the cross falls and discovers Sir Phillip.)

EDMOND.

Great Heav'n! what miracles are these we see?
Art thou th' instrument of wond'rous wisdom?
Art thou of mortal or of heav'nly mould?

What brought thee here, amidst this scene of death?
Speak, nor distract my soul with doubt or darkness!

OSWALD.

Sir Phillip Harclay, speak! why came you here?

EDMOND.

Sir Phillip Harclay! how my mind's misled!

SIR PHILLIP.

To pay a tribute to my friend deceas'd;
O'er his Mausoleum I dropt a tear,
And as it drop'd it glisten'd to my eye,
Seeming to say how soon my fate must be,
To occupy the cold unnotic'd grave——
When lo!——

The cheering words just heard—like genial heats,
Which dissipate the dense unwholesome fog,
Hath clear'd that mist which hover'd o'er my mind,
And in this youth, Lord Lovel's son I see!

EDMOND.

The source or cause of certainty explain,
Clear to my harass'd soul thy knowledge full?
Or from this moment be all prospects blank!

OSWALD.

Heaven has sent Sir Phillip to our aid,
To prove that murder—which few hours has pass'd,

Since those departed saints, in vision awful,
 To thee declar'd protection was at hand,
 That Walter Lovel murder'd Edmond's fire,
 His beauteous Mother too—she, she then fell,
 And Lovel's heir left beggar'd on the world!

SIR PHILLIP.

How wonderful are all thy works, Oh! Heaven!
 By some event of small or marv'lous import,
 The guilty foresight oft thou wisely dims,
 But if thy power, th' infernal Spirit thwarts,
 From thy own voice the information comes
 By visitation supernatural!
 Am I the instrument of heavenly wrath?
 I feel it here (*his hand on his bosom and turning to
 the tomb*) O injur'd pair attend!
 The murderer dies—I reinstate your son!

SIR PHILLIP embraces EDMOND.

OSWALD. (*much affected*)

Momentous hour! long look'd with anxious eye,
 Oswald and Joseph for events like these;
 E'er since the morn, when thou in blooming health
 Amidst Fitzowen's sons assail'd our fights,
 Did we with wond'ring fear to each declare
 Thou wert the produce of our lost Lord's loins;
 Thy valour, wisdom, person, all agree
 To prove thou art Lord Lovel's rightful heir!

EDMOND.

EDMOND.

Refrain, refrain, your thoughts are far too sanguine !
 Alas ! good Oswald, wherefore must we seek,
 An evidence to prove these facts are true ?
 Within the halls of justice, a vis'nary proof,
 Mankind would scout——treat as fancy working
 On a disorder'd brain, t' attain inherittance,
 Most men would dream for could the dream but
 tell !

OSWALD.

Within the precincts of the neighbouring wood,
 The shepherdes resides, whose gentle care
 Sustain'd thy infancy——repair to her——

EDMOND.

Oft I solicited this boon in vain !
 Alas ! the surly Rupert hath compell'd her,
 On this, to Heav'n to vow eternal silence.

SIR PHILLIP.

The fondness, which the foster mother feels,
 Perhaps might lead her to forego an oath,
 More worthy in the breach than the observance !

OSWALD.

Tis justly said, and aptly thought, Sir Phillip,
 Behold thro' yonder coppice Rupert passes,

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SIR PHILLIP.

[*Exeunt*]

A Cottage, Cicely alone.

Ah me! on this day twenty years and one,
Did Rupert place within my arms, sweet Edmond,
Naked as born, and from the womb he came——
To the castle, Rupert's gone,—I ever on this morn
Have turned o'er the riches that came with him,
(goes to a chest)

(Enter EDMOND, SIR PHILLIP, and OSWALD,
unperceiv'd.)

A peasant's mate, in humble cot, carress'd

G

That lovely babe, whom else, I'm led to think
 The proudest Lords had claim'd a kindred to;
(thoughtfully viewing a locket.)
 Full sure this is thy hair!—exact my Edmond's!
(weeps, and wipes her eyes.)

These shining stones, I fear, affect my eyes!
 Or, that dread oath, Rupert at first impos'd,
 Which robs my Edmond of his chance of right,
 Makes sad my heart and thus calls forth my tears!

(They come forward, she closes the chest and seems much confused.)

Edmond approaches and kneels at her feet in a supplicating posture.

EDMOND.

If e'er you lov'd and cherish'd me, shew it now;
 Tell me whilst breath exists, who was my mother?
 Shew me her hallow'd grave!—lead on, kind Cicely,
 To where I may let flow my furcharg'd tears,
 Lament perhaps her sad untimely end!

CICELY.

What means my Edmond? O save my Rupert's
 life!

Though rude in manners, yet, his heart is good,
 The corse he found—and shelter'd from the storm
 Thy helpless body—some riches too were thine—

Alack! alack! dear Edmond, I'm foresworn!

OSWALD.

'Twas Heav'n inspir'd thee to forego an oath,
That screen'd a murderer from avenging wrath!
Cicely be pacified, thy peace is made,
That oath which guilt extorts, God can destroy!

SIR PHILLIP.

Produce those jewels, which that chest contains,
Sir Phillip Harclay's power shall then protect thee.

CICELY.

Rupert will chide, I dare not, dare not, Sir!

(Edmond goes to the chest and brings the trinkets)

Oswald and Sir Phillip start.

SIR PHILLIP.

Ah! the Lovel arms!

OSWALD.

My Lady's crocket!

Sir Phillip and Oswald addressing themselves to Cicely:

EDMOND—*(examining the locket.)*

Are these the tresses of a murder'd mother?

Are these the locks which grac'd the forehead
smooth

Of her who gave me being?——(*kisses it, pauses*)
obtruding glafs!

Thy flinty substance bars the envied kifs.—

Attempts to break the locket open, a secret spring discovers a portrait—he stands some time, much agitated, then sighs deeply, Oswald and Sir Phillip fly to his support, when Oswald, with a frantic gesture, exclaims “MY LADY LOVEL!” Edmond sinks in Sir Phillip’s arms, and the curtain drops.—

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

Haunted Chamber, discovers Octavian and Malcolm seated at a table, a few embers burning on the hearth.

OCTAVIAN.

BY this my myrmidons have Emma safe. (*aside*)

MALCOLM.

Obstinate Fitzowen ! to spoil a night's repose.

OCTAVIAN.

Detested Edmond ! how my heart abhors thee ;
Bane to my happiness—rival in my fame——
What's worse, dear Malcolm, rival in my love ;
Fair Emma's eyes bespeak what he, poor soul
Of purity, ne'er fancies nor improves.

MALCOLM.

Full well he loves, Octavian, as proof——
The nightly lustre of the full orb'd moon,
Led me to ramble near the willow grove,

Where Emma spends her morn and evening hours;
 Our hated Edmond came—solemn and slow
 His tardy foot-steps mov'd, he sigh'd and paus'd,
 A gentle murmur then escap'd his lips,
 And Emma's name re-echo'd to the sound!

OCTAVIAN.

Would that the nightly dew's contagion, then
 Had fell, and clos'd those lips for ever!
(a groan is heard from beneath)

MALCOLM.

Hark! whence came that hollow sound, Octavian?

OCTAVIAN—(*alarmed*)

I heard no sound, but distant echo, fool;
 Cowards may magnify e'en winds to groans!

MALCOLM.

That epithet to Malcolm ne'er belong'd,
 To proud Octavian 'tis ever given!

OCTAVIAN.

'Tis false!

MALCOLM.

As false as thro' thy malice, Sir,
 I am compell'd to breath within these walls;

My peace is sacrific'd to thy ambition,
 Each ill oppressing thus my dawn of life,
 To thee I lay——thy influence my ruin! (*passionately*)

OCTAVIAN.—(*scornfully*)

The shallow waters make the louder noise!

MALCOLM—(*draws his sword*)

Malcolm will tell Octavian he's no coward!

OCTAVIAN—(*aside*)

Come forth, (*draws*) on Malcolm, first thou play'st
 thy part,
 On Edmond next——

*A groan from below, the folding doors open and the
 ghost of Lord Lovel comes forward; he frowns and
 points to the opposite door, through which Malcolm
 and Octavian trembling pass, and the scene closes.*

SCENE II.

The Hall of the Castle, the alarm bell rings.

*Lord Fitzowen, Sir Robert, Oswald, Joseph; Octa-
 vian and Malcolm supported by servants.*

FITZOWEN.

Imprudent boys—where cowardice exists,

Dread superstition e'er will take her seat :

(Bell rings)

Cease that bell ! hence to each occupation ; friends

(Exit servants)

These foolish boys by foolish fears oppress'd,
Have fancied things which reason contradicts ;
Do, Father Oswald, quiet my servant's minds ;
You have beheld this turret in its splendour ?

OSWALD.

No fearful thing 'fore Heav'n I ever saw !

FITZOWEN.

Sir Robert, go with Oswald, see all safe,
And close these rooms, the cause of this mistake.

SIR ROBERT.—*(haughtily)*

The friar best knows th' inmates of these rooms !

*(Exit Oswald on one side the stage, Octavian and
Malcolm on the other)*

Enter ARNOLD—*(hastily)*——

ARNOLD.

When from my couch I rose to learn the cause
Of this alarm, I, on my pillow, found
A note mysterious from the Orphan Edmond ;
My duty and affection prompted me,

To lay it at my lord, my father's feet.

FITZOWEN—(*reads.*)

“ My honour calls me hence—a great event,
 “ Deprives his Edmond of his Arnold's converse,
 “ Hopes still in time on terms for it to sue
 “ More equal to his birth and fortune——

“ EDMOND.”

SIR ROBERT.

It breathes deceit—of Oswald's art beware,
 Whose conduct's mark'd by mystery profound !
 All, wears an aspect treacherous and base,
 And Edmond's flight may tend to future harm.

FITZOWEN.

A mind of rectitude all art doth scorn !

SIR ROBERT.

A mind of rectitude, lull'd by its inward good,
 May not perceive a glaring outward evil ;
 A man should baseness learn by theory,
 That he may guard, my lord, against the practice.

FITZOWEN.

'Tis true, and yet, my son, a mind of weakness,
 In the investigation, might be tainted——
 Ah ! who comes here with agonizing aspect ?

H

EDMOND.

Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT.

My lord, the Lady Emma——

SIR ROBERT.

My sister! what of her?

SERVANT.

Hath fled, Sir Robert!

FITZOWEN.

My Emma? great Heav'n forbid!
 Parental horrors and affection's fears,
 Rob me of power alike to think or act:
 Pursue the ingrate Edmond, (*Exit Sir Robert*) was
 it for this,
 I nurtur'd thee within my bosom, viper?
 Took thee so young from Poverty's abode,
 And all to plant a dagger in my heart?
 O base Ingratitude thou damning vice,
 Check to all charity in men of power!

[*Exit*]*Manet* ARNOLD.

Fie, fie, my tears disgrace my nature——
 O friendship! sweet is thy solace when sincere,
 Bitter thy curse when by the ingrate borne!

Is this the Edmond, Arnold deign'd to love?—
 If he is false, farewell the worth of men,
 Farewell the gentle yearnings of compassion!—
 My sinews yet unbrac'd by robust feats,
 Feel all the force of Herculean strength,
 My friend shall die! a sister's wrongs demand it!

[Exit]

SCENE III.

Lord Walter's Castle.

Discovers LORD WALTER LOVEL.

LORD WALTER—(*spoken with great perturbation*)

Hence thought!

Let Lovel's grandeur shine without controul;
 Old priests and women babble over conscience!
 The man possess'd of wealth and num'rous honours,
 Hath nought to do with intellectual fears—
 What ho! who waits! an holiday proclaim—
 —An holy day— a day design'd for mirth? tis
 wrong—

All pious men by fasting and loud prayer
 Observe it:—but I,—away obtrusive cant,
 I'll to my pleasures! my slaves attend
 And yielding beauty calls!—joys ne'er to cloy!—
 Except indeed old age obtrudes—and then—
 Death—horrors concomitant harrow the soul!—

—Health, wealth and beauty revels in my blood,
What then with death have I to do, I ask?—

—And yet too sure I've had to do with death!—

—What ho! music for my wounded spirits!

The sparkling goblet fill—'twill rack the spleen—

—The spleen! who hath the spleen? are good men
then

Tortur'd by fancied ills—or is't the mind? again—

Curse on my slaves, why, wherefore come you not,

Your lord and master never lives alone,

Come joy with pleasure and possess my heart!

*Enter male and female ATTENDANTS with music and
wine.*

Bring me the cheering cup (*drinks*) th' enliv'ning
power

Chaces all sorrow—aye and all remorse—

—Remorse! again the cup (*drinks*) Oh! ling'ring
pain

That galleth thus my soul—again the cup!

(*soft music,*)

(*he dashes the cup from him in a rage*)

Curse on your strings, who thus in tardy movements

Vib'rate to your lingering finger's touch!

I'd music hear concordant to my mind,

Your rapid, vacant, wild and jarring notes,

Dinnyng my ears, drowning obtrusive thoughts,

Which rise eternally against my peace!

EDMOND.

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Enter a MESSENGER.

MESSENGER.

A knight for battle fit, his 'squire and suit,
Now waits within the castle's yard, and bears
His gauntlet in his willing hand, for that,
Which he alone will tell unto your lordship.

LORD WALTER.

'Tis well I come——(*to attendants*) depart ye useless
slaves! (*exeunt attendants*)
Bloodshed accords now with my soul's desire,
I feel a pleasure with mankind to combat,
For with myself I find the conflict vain!

[*Exit*]

SCENE—IV.

Lord Walter's Castle court.

Sir Phillip Harclay in Armour, his Esquire and suit.

SIR PHILLIP.

Hail cheerful day! whose brightness doth proclaim
Health to the living world; thy genial heats
And clear respiring atmosphere, affords
A short liv'd respite to complaining men!

Yet men who dare the tyrant grim defy,
Affail his darts and feize them in their progress—

SIR PHILLIP—(*interrupting*)

If in the cause of justice and of Heaven,
Their duty they fulfill, as Heaven decrees;
But here base Lovel comes to prove my words.

Enter LORD WALTER.

SIR PHILLIP.

Walter, Lord Lovel call'd, I do suppose?

LORD WALTER—(*haughtily*)

Doth thou come here but to suppose my name?

SIR PHILLIP.

I do!

LORD WALTER—(*starting*)

Ah! by what authority I ask?

SIR PHILLIP.

To-morrow that I'll prove——Walter, 'till then,
Though 'tis usurp'd, Lord Lovel be thou nam'd:
My friend and thine, Lord Clifford, lives hard by,

He will preside as umpire in our combat ;
I, Phillip Harclay, will the man produce
Who claims the title thou hast dar'd to take !

(He flings his gauntlet which Walter takes up)

'Till then, Lord Lovel, Harclay bids adieu.

LORD WALTER.

E'en now, Sir Phillip, be the conflict fix'd,
Lovel, as well as Harclay, knows no fear !

(Exit Sir Phillip and suit)

Manet LORD WALTER.

LORD WALTER.

'Tis false as hell ! black as the lips that spoke !
Guilt o'er my mind its goading influence bears ;
All thoughts—like the needle in the compass clos'd,
To one bleak point incessantly directs !
—Curs'd be ambition's power and lawless love,
All, ev'ry deed in evil's gilded page,
Which once attain'd—the only joy of man,
A mind at ease, is banish'd from the leaf,
And nought remains but doubt and boding fear !
—The peasant's whistle or his morning song,
Annoys his soul—calls forth impotent envy,
That men so poor should be supremely blest !

(Exit)

SCENE, V.

Discovers a field, with chairs of state, occupied by Lord Clifford and nobles, the trumpets sound—Lord Lovel and suit enter on one side the stage, and Sir Phillip and suit on the other.

HERALD.

The challenger ! Lord Clifford wills t' appear,
And 'fore his enemy to say the cause,
Why thus he calls him out to single combat !
(Trumpets flourish)

SIR PHILLIP.

I, Phillip Harclay, Knight, do, Walter, charge
As the base murderer of Arthur Lovel !
Whose friendship, love, and confidence, I boasted :
If that the combat he declines, we've proofs
That cry to Heav'n he is lord Arthur's murderer !
—Or, on our swords and life let truth impend.

HERALD.

The defendant next in turn his answer give,
And say if false, or true, the accusation.

LORD WALTER.

I, Walter Lovel ! baron of that name,

Affirm the charge against me is most false,
Treachorous, vile and fraudulent!
Invented by this knight but to obtain,
Those rights and titles I have long enjoy'd,
Which whilst I've breath, my lords, I will protect—
Heralds proclaim, Lord Lovel will be righted!

SIR PHILLIP.

Heralds proclaim, Lord Lovel shall be righted!

LORD CLIFFORD.

Though sorrow it doth give us thus to see,
Two noble friends meet here as mortal foes;
Let Heav'n decide between the combatants!
(giving the sword to Lord Walter)
Receive the sword and God defend the right!

LORD WALTER.

Amen! my lord, believe my cause is good.

LORD CLIFFORD.

Sir Phillip, yours, and God protect the right!

SIR PHILLIP.

Amen!

*The trumpets flourish, they fight, at length Lord
Walter falls.*

LORD WALTER.

My lords, I'm slain!

LORD CLIFFORD.—(*coming forward*)

Sir Phillip, his death forego!

SIR PHILLIP.

If that his ranc'rous soul will strait unburthen,
Still shall he live to make his peace with Heav'n!
Didst thou not kill Lord Arthur?

LORD WALTER.

'Twas not these hands
That did the fatal deed; but heav'n is just;
I die ten thousand deaths in fearing one!

(faints)

SIR PHILLIP.

Behold he faints!—with your permission, lords,
To Lovel castle we will straight remove him;
The scenes he dreads, together with remorse,
May force stern justice from his stricken heart;
Repentance, too, may intercede for mercy.

(Walter is removed)

EDMOND.

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Enter LORD FITZOWEN and suit.

FITZOWEN,—*to Sir Phillip.*

Is this the kind return for proffer'd friendship?
Was it for this Sir Phillip Harclay came,
With flattery on his tongue, to Lovel castle?

SIR PHILLIP.

Mark me, my Lord, I am no subtle knight;
Our Country's candour, bluntness, and sincerity,
In british soldiers live, void of all foreign art;
We cannot praise, but where respect is due,
Nor play on idle compliments the changes——
When vet'rans speak, both friends and foes hear
truth,
Pleasing or grating be the information!

LORD CLIFFORD.

My lord, desist! Sir Phillip's proofs are strong,
His honour unimpeach'd:—from him you'll learn
What I with wonder and amazement heard!

FITZOWEN.

But then my daughter, Clifford!

SIR PHILLIP.

Ah! what of her?

EDMOND.

FITZOWEN.

Art thou then ign'rant of her fate—alas ! I'm lost !
For on thy honour, knight, did I rely.

SIR PHILLIP.

Then, on my honour, I have ne'er beheld her !——
Seek for Octavian in this sad mishap ;
A flighted love, fed by a lustful flame,
Might restive run and spurn the bounds of honour !

FITZOWEN.

My sons and kinsman are in anxious search !
The suffering Walter our assistance claims,
We'll towards the castle steer our solemn course,
There on the spot, Sir Phillip, t'investigate
These supernatural events, Lord Clifford names !
I estimate the riches of the world,
No farther then the comforts they convey :

(to Lord Clifford, much affected)

God pleas'd to call my better part above,
Left me in charge one solitary daughter,
So mild, so chaste, so dutiful, so kind,
Each day, each hour, each moment of her life,
Claim'd all my fears, my hopes and anxious wishes !
None but a parent, can my feelings know ;
Sorrows accumulate, in length of years,
We must submit and praise the hand that chasteneth !

[Exeunt]

ACT V.—SCENE I.

A large cave with two dungeons, one open.

Enter OCTAVIAN.

OCTAVIAN.

MY kinsman, Walter, hath receiv'd his death!
A consternation through the castle reigns,
And 'midst its hurry, Octavian will enjoy,
The envied bliss of beauteous Emma's charms!

(goes to unlock the door of the dungeon)

—Some one approaches—by hell 'tis Edmond's self,
My slaves are false and have betray'd Octavian!

(draws a dagger)

This be the point on which my fate impends!

*(retires in the other cell, and in his haste leaves the
key in the lock)*

Enter EDMOND.

EDMOND.

Methought, this road, the villain took his way:
Through trackless woods, o'er mountain's un-
mark'd course,

Have I, with rapid steps, Octavian trac'd—
 Dreadful suspense—distracting fears surround me!
 Oh! Emma! suffering maid! I could forgive
 Octavian e'en, for loving thee, if thou approv'd!
 For ah! what human eye could ken thy sweetness
 And not take draughts of soul subduing love?—
 The inmates of this castle bear the aspect
 Of darken'd villainy, and as I pass'd,
 No notice took they, but confus'd ran forth
 In all directions; excepting one poor wretch,
 Who started back as though he'd seen a fiend,
 Exclaiming with a voice expressing horror
 "Oh! be at rest! I am the last remaining!"
 Ah! (*shuddering*) perhaps the murderer of my
 honour'd fire?

My love o'erpowers my duty in revenge,
 I'll seek the villain to explain the cause!

(*Emma faintly calls from the dungeon "Edmond"*)
 Hark! (*she again calls "Edmond"*) what fascinat-
 ing powers possess me,
 The voice is music to my troubled soul;—
 (*unlocks the door and discovers Emma*)

EMMA,

Edmond! Oh! Edmond, then doth thou combine?

EDMOND.—(*supporting her*)

'Tis her! 'tis Emma! wonder-working Heav'n!

Calling me thus to Emma's preservation ;
 Oh ! fate most blest'd — Oh ! providence
 supreme !

*Octavian darts from the passage and attempts to stab
 Emma; Edmond arrests his arm in the act and takes
 the dagger from him.*

EDMOND.

Forbear, assassin ! where Heav'n deigns to protect,
 Hell is impotent in its direst force !
 No words from those vile lips pollute her ear,
 Hence ! (*forcing him in the dungeon*)
 There take repose preparatory,
 To that attendant on thy future fate !

(*closes the door*)

Oh ! Lady Emma ! e'en manhood sickens, when
 The murderer wields the deadly polish'd blade ;
 But how encreas'd the horror, if we find,
 That female innocence becomes their prey !

EMMA.

My fame ! thy life ! preserve ; kind Edmond,
 Octavian's villains still may be abroad !

EDMOND.

Within your cell retire — will Emma fair
 Consent to be my prisoner awhile ?

And e'er the night its dusky mantle flings;
 Emma shall rest within her Father's arms.

(she enters the dungeon)

EDMOND.—*(looking at the key)*

Key of my heart! master of all my treasure!
 Each massy ward, a safe-guard intricate,
 Which gracious Heaven hath vouchsaf'd to trust
 To Edmond's keeping; and all his prayers shall be
 "May he deserve the charge!"——
(goes to lock the door)

Enter SIR ROBERT.—*(hastily)*

SIR ROBERT.

The charge is thine! this sword be thy desert!
(they draw)
 Bane of my house, despoiler of our honour,
 Here be thou punish'd ingrate and apostate!

EDMOND.—*(flings the sword from him)*

That charge being false, on that, I shall not combat!
(opens his breast)

Rather, Sir Robert, shall Fitzowen's son
 Draw forth the vital spark from Edmond's bosom,
 Than Edmond's sword his patron's peace destroy!

*(Sir Robert prepares to strike, when the doors of the
 cells open, and discover Octavian and Emma)*

EMMA.—(*kneels to Sir Robert*)

Save my preserver's life!—behold the wretch!

(*pointing to Octavian*)

Who forc'd me from my noble Father's mansion;
Nor deign'd to guard me from the rude assaults,
Of hir'd assassins, whose avaricious views,
Alone deter'd them from the worst of crimes!
—E'en now his dagger aim'd against my life!

SIR ROBERT.—(*springing towards Octavian*)

I'll lodge my sword within his pois'nous chest!
(*Edmond and Emma prevent him*)

EMMA.

Stain not thy sword! the villain is unarm'd!

EDMOND.

His life, a burthen 'midst the scorn of men,
Will bear a punishment within itself,
For those ill-deeds which hath so early stain'd it!

SIR ROBERT.—(*haughtily*)

Octavian live! 'tis Edmond gives thee life!
Whose youthful flights, were check'd by cold
contempt,

K

Sprung from thy influence, and mistaken pride!

(to Edmond)

Here now thou liv'st! *(his hand on his breast)* and
further note, Octavian,

(turning to Octavian and taking Emma's hand)

With joy extatic, thus I, Emma, offer,
To one whole birth's unknown, but heart can boast,
More honour than some coronets contain!

OCTAVIAN.

Now am I curs'd, and suffer more this moment,
Than all the tortures death could e'er inflict!

[Exit]

EDMOND.—*(affected)*

Fitzowen's daughter, and a peasant's son unite!

No! a great event doth hover o'er my fate

And Walter Lovel, bears th'eventful fiat!

The hand thou offer'st, proudly I refuse! *[Exit]*

SIR ROBERT.

'Tis he!

EMMA.

Rejected! too gen'rous Edmond!

SIR ROBERT.

Oh! venerate his great and virtuous soul!

I, who have labour'd to traduce his worth,
 Will now endeavour to restore to him,
 Those rights and titles, I should myself possess;
 But which, I fear, came foully to our power;
 Emma, we'll follow——virtue demands reward!
[Exeunt]

SCENE II.

*Discovers Lord Walter Lovel on a couch, supported
 by Father Oswald and Joseph: Lord Fitzowen, and
 Lord Clifford standing by him, Sir Phillip Harclay,
 opposite.*

SIR PHILLIP.—(*coming forward*)

On Father Oswald's promise, ponder well,
 This stubborn silence, which you now observe,
 Heightens your crimes in God's all seeing eye!

*Enter SIR ROBERT, with EDMOND in his Father's
 armour.*

LORD WALTER.—(*on seeing him starts*)

He lives! he lives! approach my dying arms,
 Afford thy pardon to a wretch destroy'd!

FITZOWEN.

Awful convincing proof!

EDMOND.

SIR ROBERT.

Most wonderful!

LORD WALTER.

I could have sworn thee dead; Oh! blest relief!
Approach with dire reproaches on thy tongue!

SIR PHILLIP.

This is Lord Arthur Lovel's lawful son!

LORD WALTER.—(*with horror*)

Then, mark th' ev'ry struggle of corroding death!—
Curse thou the blight, which blew contagion o'er
thy youth!

Struck at thy nurturing root, the fatal axe,
And fell'd thy Father in the prime of life!
Pluck'd, too, the blossom from thy mother's cheek
Planting the pallid snowdrop's deadly white——

EDMOND.

Oh! in mercy spare the sad confession!

LORD WALTER.

Well may'st thou turn—if horror shak'st thy soul,
How mult mine rage thus rushing on Eternity,
With barbarous murder's heavy galling chains?
Hark! heard you not a faint, a piteous scream?

A scream of terror—then a deadly groan—a groan !
Would melt the hardest heart—but Walter's—
A brother's groan, sprung from a brother's poniard ;
Behold ! a fratricide in death ! ambition's victim !
(dies)

FITZOWEN.

Terrific guilt ! but far more awful when
Death hovers o'er the soul of him possessing.

OSWALD.

Here, Retribution with a threat'ning frown,
Deters the wretch, uninfluenc'd by that Power,
Which cheers man's hopes and checks his erring
nature.

(the corps and couch removed)

SIR PHILLIP.

'Tis past, my friends, peace to his troubled soul !

Enter Arnold, leading in Emma.

Edmond embraces Arnold, Sir Phillip addresses Emma.

FITZOWEN.

The period's come when providence decrees
We hail this injur'd youth as heir of Lovel !
(Edmond kneels to Lord Fitzowen.)

EDMOND.

EDMOND.

My Lord! Patron! Father! each binding call,
Would Edmond's gratitude Fitzowen give!

(turning to Sir Phillip)

The joint protection of my rever'd friends,
Will form a phalanx of innumerable honours! —
The gem I seek, the riches feign possess,
Do all concentrate in this beauteous fair!
Together 'neath your influence may we live?

SIR PHILLIP.

Will Lord Fitzowen, permit an aged knight,
To offer thus a chaste deserving maid!

FITZOWEN.

The daughter's will, when merit is the choice,
Should ever govern the parental power.

EMMA.

The daughter disobeying such a Father,
Would ill deserve the blessings he bestows!

Edmond receives Emma from Sir Robert, and Arnold.

EDMOND.

Oh! Emma, Emma, how my anxious mind,
Look'd for those honours which might honour thee!

EDMOND.

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(to Oswald and Joseph)

Can words express the tenor of my soul,
Can deeds convey an adequate return?

OSWALD.

Impossible! the feelings of excessive joy,
Cannot be weigh'd by words, or worldly deeds;
Our hearts, worn out by lengthen'd cares and woe,
Cast forth a gleam, e'er death removes their light—
In Heaven alone, we look for our reward!

EDMOND

High beats my heart to Providence supreme!
Numerous the debts of gratitude I owe!

(to the Audience)

Turn where I will the pleasing call appears,
And death alone, can cancel the remembrance!

FINIS.

EPILOGUE.

MERCY! an attribute of heav'nly birth,
Graces the actions of mankind on earth!
Impress'd by this, I, for the Author plead,
And trust its influence, here, may take the lead!

In various minds, as various thoughts, preside,
Some may applaud, whilst others may deride —
The beau, against the bard, exclaims with wrath,
“ How dare he vary from the beaten path ?
“ A Tragedy, and ne’er perform’d in town,
“ Man of no note—the thing will ne’er go down——
“ Depend upon’t they’ll deem it vastly rude,
“ Thus on the world his bantling to obtrude” ——
Whilst town-bred Miss, with shrugs and gentle squeaks,
Thus to Mamina, her thoughts, in simpers, speaks——
“ The tragic muse——an horrid bore to me,
“ I like some funny things to drive ennui ——
“ Your MUNDENS, BANISTERS, and such like folk,
“ Who give the merry song or laughing joke ;
“ And for fine sentiments, and all such stuff,
“ At church, dear me, our parson gives enough !
“ And that, from thence, comes cheaper still d’y’e see,
(looking archly)
“ A shilling contribution ! he ! he ! he ! ”

EPILOGUE.

Taught thus to prate, or wield the anxious card,
Sweet Miss, of wit brim-full, rails 'gainst our bard,
Fancies his a clever, and her shrew'd Mamma,
Adds to her "ho! he! ha!"—her—"ha! ha! ha!"

Thus authors, who presume, their works to shew,
Stand at the bar of critics high and low;—
The weak man's envy, and the pedant's scoff,
The wise man's mercy, and the rich man's laugh;
The witling's wit, the rude man's vulgar jest,
The flatt'rer's sawn, as irksome as the rest!
—Their joint attacks the Author cannot move,
If candid critics condescend t'approve;
THEY are the judges of his head and heart,
And *he* submits, whilst THEY enact their part.

